

Amendments To The Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown.

1-12. (canceled)

13. (currently amended) A method for forwarding a signaling message of the type used to establish a communication connection between devices present in two or more communication networks wherein communication between different devices in different networks may require conversion between signaling connection protocols in order to establish the connection, comprising:

generating a first signaling message from a first device according to a first protocol and comprising instructions for setting up a connection between the first signaling device and a second signaling device in a different network;

providing a network access device (i) capable of receiving and processing signaling messages of multiple different protocols, including the first protocol, and (ii) capable of forwarding the first signaling message without performing conversion of the signaling message to an internal signaling protocol of the network access device and (iii) capable of forwarding the first signaling message without conversion to a different one of the multiple protocols and (iv) capable of converting the entire first signaling message to a different one of the multiple protocols before forwarding;

connecting the first and second networks via the network access device;

transferring the signaling message from the first device to the network access device;

determining if the first signaling protocol and a second signaling protocol supported by the second device are the same protocol, the determination made by the network access device and based on a target datum in the first signaling message;

if the protocols are not the same, then

converting the entire signaling message into the second signaling protocol,

transferring the converted signaling message to the second device by tunneling the message through the network access device ~~third network~~; and

if the protocols are the same, then

transferring the signaling message to the second device by tunneling the message through the network access device ~~third network~~ without performing conversion of the signaling message to any internal signaling protocol of the network access device.

14. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein protocol conversion is handled by the network access device, and wherein transferring the signaling message from the first device to the network access device is effected by tunneling the message through a third network.

15. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein the network access device performs functions of a telecommunication device, which serves for a switching of a connection for a transfer of voice data in a private data transfer network.

16. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein the network access device switches a connection that transfers voice data in a private data transfer network.

17. (previously presented) The method according to claim 16, wherein a data transfer network functions according to the internet protocol.

18. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein the network access device performs a network access function for a plurality of terminal devices of a local data network

19. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein the network access device performs a network access function for a central device of a plurality of local data transfer networks, and the central device performs services for a plurality of terminal devices of a data transfer network.

20. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein multiple different signaling protocols include ones selected from the group consisting of SIP, H.323, QSIG, SIP based, H.323 based, QSIG based, and combinations thereof.

21. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, further comprising:  
reading the target datum with an access function that reads target data of various  
signaling protocols; and  
determining the first signaling protocol of the received signaling message;
22. (previously presented) The method according to claim 20, wherein no protocol  
conversion is required if the first and second signaling protocols are in a same protocol family.
23. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, further comprising:  
storing the first message in the first protocol in a storage device; and  
deciding if a protocol conversion is required after the storage step.
24. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein the signaling  
message relates to a transfer of voice data and/or to the performance of additional service  
features for the transfer of voice data.
25. (previously presented) The method according to claim 24, wherein the transfer of  
voice data is in an operating data packet.
26. (canceled)
27. (canceled)
28. (canceled)
29. (canceled)

30. (currently amended) A network access device for forwarding a signaling message from a first device in a first device in a first network to a second device in a second network, comprising:

a control device for evaluating the signaling message and determining the second terminal device;

a compare device that compares a first signaling protocol of the signaling message received from the first device and a second signaling protocol supported by the second device; and

a transfer device that transfers the signaling message to the second device, said network access device configured to establish a connection between the first and second devices by (i) receiving and processing signaling messages of multiple different protocols, including the first and second protocols, while (ii) capable of forwarding the signaling message from the first device without performing conversion of the signaling message to an internal signaling protocol of the network access device and (iii) capable of forwarding the first signaling message without conversion to a different one of the multiple protocols and (iv) capable of converting the entire first signaling message to the second protocol if the second protocol is supported by the second device before forwarding to the second device.

31. (previously presented) The network access device according to claim 30, further comprising an interface that accesses a storage device, the storage device comprising an association between a terminal device and a server as well as an association between a protocol and the server.

32. (previously presented) The network access device according to claim 30, further comprising a conversion device that converts the signaling message embodied according to the first signaling protocol to the second signaling message protocol.